

Office Memorandum

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. D. M. Ladd

DATE: November 12, 1954

FROM : A. Rosen

SUBJECT:

Mr. Olney called at 9:55 A.M.

He stated that there was on file in the Bureau a memorandum involving the question of possible civil rights infringement at St. Louis.

A complaint has been received by the Department that in connection with the selection of jurors, the prospective jurors are sent a questionnaire which they must fill out and that one of the blanks requires that they indicate whether they are colored or white.

Mr. Olney said that in this connection there is no question that such a procedure is illegal and there is the further question that if this procedure, which apparently has been in existence, is examined that it might very well invalidate indictments previously drawn and current jury action.

I asked him who had instituted and who was responsible for this procedure. He stated that his information is that it was the clerk of the court who had disseminated such circulars.

He also states that the cases which are put in the jury wheel also have the same information.

Mr. Olney stated he believed that there was a case in Georgia wherein this very question arose, and it was his recollection that the indictment was set aside when it was ascertained that the question as to color had been raised in connection with the selection of jurors.

He stated that he was calling on this matter because the real importance of this inquiry had not been outlined in the memorandum requesting that an investigation be conducted into the question whether there had been a violation of civil rights.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

A copy has been placed for this memorandum and just as soon as it is received it will be brought to the Director's attention. An investigation will be immediately instituted.